Washington Military Department	Effective Date: July 1, 2005	Page 1 of 2
Emergency Management Division, Enhanced 911 Unit	**E911 Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) Support Policy**	

Policy

Computer-Aided Dispatch Support Policy

Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system hardware and software in accordance with WAC 118-66-050 are eligible for reimbursement as an eligible Enhanced 911 expense. CAD software is an information management tool for public safety communications professionals. It helps to automate the entry, storage and retrieval of information that is essential to handling requests for assistance from citizens placing 911 calls, and necessary technology required for improving the overall emergency response to the public in need of Law, Fire, or Medical assistance.

This policy applies to all Washington State Counties that have contracts with the State E911 Office.

Background

I. CAD is a software program specifically designed for the entry of incident information either by a call taker from 911 phone callers or by radio dispatcher from field units. CAD displays that information on the computer screen to assist in quickly and efficiently dispatching and tracking the activities of field units to handle those incidents. As part of this process, CAD also allows the radio dispatcher to track and change the status of field units so their availability is immediately obvious, the radio dispatcher can then determine which units to assign to pending incidents.

II. CAD also keeps an archive of past E911 incidents and unit status changes for future reference, and permits various reports to be printed out based on incident and unit activity. CAD also stores more static information such as, files of streets within the jurisdiction, a list of employees, or free-text files on any type of reference information the dispatchers might need to review quickly.

III. A CAD system can include electronic links to other computer systems, including the E911 telephone system, criminal justice and motor vehicle files (warrants, stolen property and vehicles, missing persons, vehicle registrations, driver's licenses, etc.) and mobile data systems.

IV. CAD software can run on a stand-alone personal computer at a single console and at one location, or it may be installed on a central computer networked to multiple E911 terminals spread over a wide geographic area, and serving several agencies (law enforcement, fire and EMS) and jurisdictions.

V. Prior to approval of this policy, the State E911 Office has reimbursed for CAD hardware and software. Maintenance was not to exceed 10 percent of the original eligible purchase price of the equipment per year.

Analysis

I. There are several objectives when purchasing a computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system:
- Increase the efficiency of E911 call takers in obtaining information from 911 callers
- Improve the accuracy and consistency of E911 call information
- Increase and improve the quality of information available to the dispatchers, and subsequently the field forces, so that the quality of their decisions and actions is improved
- Increase the amount of information collected about E911 incidents, response times and dispatching operations, so decisions on staffing and scheduling are more accurate
- Support the objective of maintaining accountability for E911 department activities

II. To meet these objectives, a CAD system must meet the following criteria:
- It must include the types of dispatching operations that the agency requires
- It should allow customization to accommodate the agency's current terminology and geography, or at least minimize the number of operational changes that must be made to operate the software
- It must operate fast enough to keep up with the operation
- It must be capable of expansion to handle additional E911 call takers, field units, or dispatching sites as the agency grows, accepts consolidations or otherwise takes on additional duties or agencies.
- It must collect the type of information needed to make E911 management decisions
- It must be supported by a company that can provide custom programming for features unique to E911 and the agency, for operating system or other upgrades as they're introduced, and to add or accommodate future technology advancements in hardware or software
- Support an open architecture concept for sharing data between dissimilar systems and shall meet APCO 36 standards when they are developed

Decision

I. The purchase of new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), which consists of the basic hardware and/or software, is considered an eligible 911 expenditure. The basic components of the CAD system at a minimum shall consist of hardware, call entry module, geodata module and interface to GIS, and TDD interface. The interfaces to ANI/ALI controller are fundable under S9.0 of the contract policies. This includes upgrades to add new software features and hardware, or acquisitions to replace failed components subject to the following limits:
   a. CAD system hardware and software must be reasonable, prudent, and applicable to 911.
   b. Prior to purchasing the equipment, written approval must be received from the State 911 Coordinator.

   Maintenance of the CAD system's hardware and software will not exceed 10 percent of the purchase price excluding non WAC or policy eligible items (i.e., personnel module) and based on paragraph 1 above. Maintenance for component upgrades will be included in the maintenance calculation with the following limitation: Upon completion of the component(s) upgrade, the cost of any component(s) upgraded will be subtracted from the original CAD component cost. The costs of the new upgraded component(s) will then be added to the original purchase price.

Approved by: _____ **Dated:** 5 May 2005
Robert Oenning, State E911 Administrator

Distribution:
Hard copy: Counties with FY05 contract files, E911 Administrator, all E911 State Staff
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